

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 PORT A 01730 051856Z

40

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCCT-02 SY-04 USSS-00 FBIE-00 PA-04

PRS-01 USIE-00 ARAE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 INR-11

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SCS-03 SCA-01 PPT-02 L-03 /053 W

----- 038301

O 051816Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8506

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PORT AU PRINCE 1730

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ASEC, CASC, CDES, PFOR, PINT, HA

SUBJECT: EXPLOSION AT CASTEL HAITI HOTEL

REF: P-AU-P 1727

1. INTERIOR SECRETARY BLANCHET INVITED EMBOFF THIS MORNING TO PARTICIPATE AT INFORMAL INQUEST AT THE CASTEL HAITI HOTEL AT 10:00 AM OVER WHICH HE PRESIDED, AND AT WHICH WERE THE APPROPRIATE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND JUDICIAL OFFICIALS. BLANCHET SAID HE GAVE CAREFUL INSTRUCTIONS TO ENSURE BEST POSSIBLE MEDICAL CARE FOR CINDY ABRAMS, WHO WOULD NOT BE INTERVIEWED BY GOH UNTIL DOCTORS SAY SHE IS IN FIT CONDITION. HE PROMISED TO NOTIFY EMBASSY AT THAT TIME. HE EMPHASIZED HIS INTENTION TO INCLUDE THIS EMBASSY THROUGHOUT ENTIRE COURSE OF INVESTIGATION IN TESTIMONY TO GOOD RELATIONS EXISTING BETWEEN US AND HAITI. BLANCHET REFERRED TO HAITI'S NEED FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TO PULL HERSELF OUT OF EXTREME POVERTY, AND SAID INCIDENTS OF THIS SORT CAST A SHADOW OVER COUNTRY. HE HOPED THAT THROUGH CLOSE COLLABORATION TOGETHER USG AND GOH COULD PUT SUCH SHADOWS BEHIND US.

2. GOH INVESTIGATION AT CASTEL HAITI HOTEL BEING DIRECTED BY COL. LEON ACHILLE, HEAD OF THE CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT. AT INFORMAL INQUEST ACHILLE TOLD BLANCHET, EMBOFF, AND ABOUT A DOZEN INTERIOR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 PORT A 01730 051856Z

AND JUSTICE OFFICIALS THAT BLAST OCCURRED AT ABOUT 17:45 HRS.

SEPTEMBER 4. HE TENTATIVELY CONCLUDED THAT THE DYNAMITE COULD NOT HAVE EXPLODED SPONTANEOUSLY SINCE IT DEFINITELY REQUIRED DETONATOR. THE DEAD MAN, TENTATIVELY IDENTIFIED AS RALPH HARRINGTON, WAS APPARENTLY WORKING WITH, AND LEANING OVER, A DYNAMITE BOMB ON THE FLOOR NEXT TO HIS BED AT THE TIME OF THE EXPLOSION. THIS, HE FELT, EXPLAINED WHY THE VICTIM'S FACE WAS VIRTUALLY DESTROYED, STOMACH RIPPED OPEN, LOWER LEFT ARM BLOWN OFF, AND LOWER LEFT LEG SMASHED AND TWISTED OUT OF NORMAL ALIGNMENT. ACHILLE HAD TAKEN PICTURES OF THE BODY WHERE IT WAS FOUND, COPIES OF WHICH HE PROMISED TO DELIVER TO EMBASSY SOONEST. ACHILLE FOUND TWO OTHER UNEXPLODED DYNAMITE BOMBS IN THE BEDROOM. ACHILLE ALSO PROMISED TO DELIVER TO EMBASSY BY LATE AFTERNOON PERSONAL PAPERS AND EFFECTS FOUND AS HIS MEN SIFTED THE WRECKAGE. ACHILLE HOPED TO GET FINGERPRINT IMPRESSIONS OF AT LEAST SOME FINGERS OF DECEASED'S REMAINING HAND, WHICH HE AND BLANCHET REQUESTED WE SEND IMMEDIATELY TO FBI FOR PURPOSE OF VERIFYING IDENTIFICATION.

3. HOTEL MANAGER ADDED THAT COUPLE HAD TOLD HIM THAT THEY FLEW TO CAP HAITIEN MONDAY MORNING, SEPT. 2, RETURNING TUESDAY AFTERNOON. THEY ALSO TOLD MANAGER THEY HAD STAYED AT HOTEL ROI CHRISTOPHE AND HAD MET SOMEONE WHO TOOK THEM BOATING. THE MANAGER SAID THEY APPEARED RELAXED, AND HAD GIVEN EVERY IMPRESSION OF BEING TOURISTS ENJOYING A NORMAL SHORT HOLIDAY IN HAITI. (WE LEARNED THAT HARRINGTON WAS BOOKED TO RETURN TO MIAMI SEPT. 6 VIA AF 350.) (MANAGER ALSO ADVISED EMBOFF THAT LAST NIGHT HE GOT CALL FROM MIAMI HERALD REPORTER WHO ALREADY KNEW HARRINGTON'S NAME AND ROOM NUMBER AT HOTEL. HE SAID HE GAVE BRIEF, FACTUAL ACCOUNT TO REPORTER, WHO PROMISED NOT TO USE HIS NAME.)

4. JUSTICE SECRETARY JEANTY ARRIVED AT END OF PRELIMINARY INQUEST, AND REITERATED TO EMBOFF BLANCHET'S EARLIER REQUEST FOR ALL POSSIBLE USG ASSISTANCE IN VERIFYING IDENTITIES, AND DETERMINING IF POSSIBLE REASON FOR COUPLE'S TRIP TO HAITI AND POSSESSION OF POWERFUL EXPLOSIVES. JEANTY SAID GOH WAS RPT WAS PLANNING TO INFORM THE PRESS ABOUT INCIDENT, ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT SAY WHEN OR HOW.
THOMSON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BOMBING, HOTELS, POLICE INVESTIGATIONS, DEATHS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: papenddr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974PORTA01730
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740246-0817
From: PORT AU PRINCE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740972/aaaacjbk.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: P-AU-P 1727
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: papenddr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 JUN 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 SEP 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <26 FEB 2003 by shawdg>; WITHDRAWN <13 Jun 2005 by BoyleJA, PRIVACY>; RELEASED <17 JUN 2005 by powellba2>; APPROVED <21 JUN 2005 by papenddr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EXPLOSION AT CASTEL HAITI HOTEL
TAGS: ASEC, CASC, CDES, PINS, PINT, HA, (ABRAMS, CINDY), (HARRINGTON, RALPH)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005